THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Government has been reiterating India's position on Pakistan's proposal for setting up of South Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone at all relevant multilateral fora and in bilateral discussions with the representatives of various countries including the republics constituting CIS and the countries in our neighbourhood.

Fear of Indo-Pak Nuclear War

2725. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention was drawn to the statement of CIA Director Mr. R. Gates before a Congressional Committee, as reported in the *Times of India* dated December 12, 1991 expressing his fear of an Indo-Pak Nuclear War; and

(b) if so, what is the Government's information about Mr. Gates assessment of the situation and the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. Govt, have noted the Press reports on this matter.

(b) Govt, are curious about this statement and after examining the actual text have issued a response contained in the enclosed statement by the official spokesman.

Statement

Spokesman's Statement on Mr. Robert Gates, Director, CIA's Statement before the US Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs

While briefing newsmen, the Spokesman said that Government's attention has been drawn to the statement made on January the 15th, Mr. Robert Gates, The Director of the Centra) Intelligence Agency (CIA), before the US Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. India is curious about some remarks that Mr. Gates had made. India would like to put the record straight on a number of issues raised by Mr. Gates.

In the first place, the Spokesman said, India does not possess nuclear weapons. India's nuclear programme is totally dedicated to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. India does not have chemical weapons or a chemical weapons programme. India was one of the first countries to sign the 1925 Geneva Protocol on the non-use of chemical weapons. Presently India is working closely with a number of delegations in the Conference on Disarmament to conclude by this year a Convention to Ban Chemical Weapons. India has banned the export of chemicals that could be used as chemical weapons precursors. India has repeatedly advocated with Pakistan the signing of a bilateral agreement to ban the development, production, deployment and use of chemical weapons.

India's Integrated Missile Development Programme is indigenous.-India does not depend on other countries in this matter. Indeed, India is one of the largest producers of some of those advanced materials, and, hence, the question of their import does not arise. India has not transferred or sold any of the technologies involved, in spite of many requests to do so.

India and the Commonwealth of Independant States, have a continuing programme of exchange of scientists in open areas of scientific research and development. India has adequate scientific manpower for her needs and has little need for any equivalent of 'Operation Paper Clip'.

NEW DELHI

Dated: 28-01-1992

Dangers posed to Peace due to disintegration of Soviet Union

2726. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item that appeared in the *Times of India* dated 20th December, 1991 captioned "who controls the Soviet Nuclear button", wherein it has been stated that no one knows that is the Soviet chain of